Benjamin Richter

Informational Text-Discussion Plan

**Part 1: Text Analysis**

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| **Resources** | **Challenges** |
| Page 10-11, title page, “See how Cheetahs survive in the wild.” The title of the article does a good job informing of what article is about. | Page 12, first three paragraphs, “runs out of breath”: No background information just jumps right in, makes cheetahs seem like they are not good hunters, contradictory to the title. Can be unclear and confusing to reader. |
| Page 12, “pray”. Word is bolded and definition is in the back of the article, helps reader understand more difficult words. | Page 12, “grasslands”. Even though the definition of the words is within the word, it can be difficult to know what word means and without prior knowledge the reader must make an inference to the meaning of the word. |
| Page 12, “Yet the cheetah is one of the world’s most successful predators.” This sentence is a good, clear statement in the text of what the rest of the article is going to be about. | Page 13, “small termite mound”. Would need background knowledge to know what this is, students need to be guided to look at the pictures and the text box to understand. |
| Page 12, “An adaptation is a behavior or body part that helps an animal survive.” The word adaptation is a difficult word for 2nd or 3rd graders and it shows how the word is related to the article. | Page 13, picture on the right hand side. In the text box it states the purpose of this mound is to, “get a better view of its environment.” There is no environment to compare it to which can be confusing. |
| Page 13, “They help cut down glare from the bright sun so the cheetah can see better.” This is a concept that students can relate to. | Page 13, “gazelle”. A gazelle is not a common animal and students might not know what a gazelle is and why a cheetah would not want to be spotted by a gazelle. |
| Page 12-13, picture on the bottom. Able to clearly see how there is a black mark on the cheetahs face running from the eyes to the mouth, a real cheetah because the genre is non-fiction. | Page 14, “80 kph (50 mph)”. This can be a confusing concept because students have nothing to compare this speed to know how fast it really is. |
| Page 13, “Now, it’s harder…” This transition word helps the reader understand how it’s difficult for gazelles to see cheetahs. |  |
| Page 14, all of the headings. Each heading is a good predictor of what is to come in each section. | Page 14, section under “Fast on Its Feet”. Even though the words in the text are descriptive, the concept of how the cheetah’s body moves when it runs is difficult to understand. |
| Page 14, “A cheetah has a long, flexible spine.” This is a good, descriptive sentence to help build understanding in the text. | Page 14, “blunt”. Must make inference from the text on what this word means. |
| Page 14, “It’s like a boat’s rudder.” A comparison can help with understanding. | Page 14, “During a chase, these claws dig into the ground.” Never says why digging into the ground is helpful, must male inference. |
| Page 15, the picture. Shows a good representation of the tail as a rudder to help reader build an understanding. | Page 15, the picture. Discussed a lot of difficult concepts in the text on page 14 and the picture does not build understanding of all of the difficult concepts. |
| Page 16, first two paragraphs. Gives a good description of how a cheetah sneaks up on the gazelle. | Page 16, “give it lightning speed.” This comparison could confuse the students because lightning moves much faster and is not a good comparison. |
| Page 16, paragraphs under “Moment of Truth”. The text organization in this section helps the reader form an image in their head of what the scene looks like when the cheetah goes after and catches its prey. |  |
| Page 16-17, the picture. The labels on the picture help show and represent from what the text was saying. |  |
| Page 17, the wordwise. There were some difficult vocabulary words in the article and this helps to give a definition of those words that were bolded throughout the article. |  |

**Part 2: Learning Goals**

1. Main Idea

A cheetah is able to hunt its prey in the wild. The cheetah first is able to spot their prey. The different adaptations a cheetah can make help aid the cheetah when hunting its prey. Finally, what the cheetah does right before they catch their prey and once the prey has been caught.

2. Big Idea

How the food chain works, and how members higher up on the food chain are better equipped for survival. How different animals make different adaptations to help them with survival. How many different features on an animal’s body have purposes to help with survival.

3. Learning Goals

How does a cheetah spot their prey?

* A cheetah has black lines running from theirs eyes to their mouth to absorb the sun and help reduce the glare.
* The cheetah will climb on a small termite mound in order to get a better view of everything from higher perspective.
* A cheetah is able to camouflage itself with the grass not being seen as easily.

How does a cheetah make different adaptations that can help aid it when hunting its prey?

* A cheetah’s tail acts as a rudder allowing it to make sharp and quick turns when it is chasing the gazelle.
* A cheetah has a flexible spine, which allows for a spring like motion when it is running.
* It has a lightweight skeleton which will help decrease the weight of the cheetah, thus allowing it to run faster.
* A cheetah has semi-retractable claws. They retract to help keep sharp which is needed to attract prey, but do not retract all the way so while the cheetah is running the claws can help with gripping.
* It has a large heart and lungs; therefore it can take in a lot of air helping it to avoid fatigue when chasing their prey.
* The grooved footpads help to give the cheetah better traction when running.

What does the cheetah do with the prey right before and once that they have caught their prey?

* The prey is used as good, and if the cheetah does not catch anything, it will go hungry.
* The cheetah will swat their prey when they get close enough to them while chasing them.
* Then it will bite their neck in order to kill them.
* The cheetah must not rest for too long and eat their prey quickly because other animals will steal it.

How do different animals play different roles in the food chain?

* The cheetah chases after the gazelle and will eat the gazelle.
* Lions and leopards will eat gazelles also.

**Part 3: The Launch**

Launch will be done while showing pages 10-11 of the article.

* First read the title of the article.
* Give the students a comparison by saying, “Have you ever seen a friend running really fast across the playground? Well, a cheetah moves much faster than that to catch their prey.”
* Discuss the picture in the article and how we see a cheetah clearly on the move, and wonder why a cheetah would be on the move so fast.
* Discuss how a cheetah on the move must have a purpose.
* Ask the learning goals, as we are reading this article, think about:
  + How will a cheetah spot their prey?
  + How does a cheetah make different adaptations, make different movements with their body, to help them catch their prey?
  + What will a cheetah do with the prey once it has been caught?
  + Ask the big idea question, as a cheetah plays a role in the food chain; let’s think what roles in the food chain the other animals in the article play?
* “Let’s read through the article in order to learn all about the cheetah.”

**Part 4: Exit Activity**

I will use two different exit activities in order to assess if the students understand all of the learning goals. I will use a worksheet for the main idea learning goals, and a miniature research project to assess the understanding of the big idea.

Depending on if I am reading with 2nd or 3rd graders will depend if I use short-answer questions or multiple-choice questions.

If I use short answer questions I will ask:

What on a cheetah’s face help in order to spot their prey?

How does a cheetah get a full view over the grasslands?

Identify 2 different adaptations that a cheetah is able to make in order to help it capture its prey.

How does a cheetah capture their prey while they are still moving?

What does a cheetah do to its prey once it has caught it?

For multiple choices I would ask all of these questions, just with different choices for the students to identify their answers.

For the miniature research project I will give the students a list of three different animals they can study and I want them to draw an example of a food chain. I will present an already made example for a cheetah and the students will not be allowed to use the same animal. The three different animals would be a mouse, owl, and shark. This will help show that students understand what a food chain is. Then, the students will present their different drawings, and this can show there are different food chains that exist and where each animal belongs on a food chain.

**Part 5: Planning ways to support student’s interactions with text ideas.**

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| Page/ending phrase | Questions and responses you expect |
| Page 12, “After that, it runs out of breath.” | Q: What is the author saying about a cheetah?  A: That a cheetah is not good at catching its prey.  F: In article where we are reading about how a cheetah is good at catching prey, why would the author do this?  A: To show that a cheetah is really not good at hunting.  F: Let’s read and find out. |
| Page 12, “Yet the cheetah is one of the world’s most successful predators. | Q: Who knows what the word predator means?  A: An animal that eats other animals.  F: So if the cheetah is such a successful predator, why does it have so many negative attributes?  A: It is a good predator because it is so fast. |
| Page 12, “A characteristic is a trait that makes something different from others.” | Q: A cheetah can go through many different adaptations and characteristics that help it catch its prey, does anyone have any guesses on why the cheetah is so good?  A: One characteristic is that it runs fast.  F: Does anyone else have any other guesses?  A: Different guesses will be imaginative but not accurate unless a student has prior knowledge. |
| Page 13, “Now, it’s harder for the gazelles to see the cheetah.” | Q: First, does anyone know what a gazelle is?  A: A type of animal.  F: Explain what type of animal a gazelle is. How does a cheetah go on the lookout for other animals?  A: Goes on top of a termite mound.  Q: How is a cheetah able to see on top of the termite mound, even with the bright sun?  A: They have black on their faces going from their eyes to their mouths.  Q: How is the cheetah able to move through the grass slowly to sneak up on their prey?  A: They are the same color as the grass. |
| Page 14, “Its body is lean, and even its bones have adaptations to help it run fast across the grasslands.” | Q: 50 mph that is fast, does anyone know how fast 50 mph is?  A: (Could be many different answers) That is how fast my parents drive on the highway.  F: What would you do if you could run that fast?  A: I would run to school every morning. |
| Page 14, “…legs fold under its body.” | Q: A cheetah’s spine acts like a spring, what does a spring do?  A: It can get bigger or smaller.  F: Could you imagine if your spine was able to work as a spring? |
| Page 14, “it must find other prey, or go hungry.” | Q: We have now read about multiple ways a cheetah’s body is built for hunting their prey, what is one way?  A: They have bigger lungs to take in more air.  F: What is another way?  A: Its legs stretch out in front and in back, and at some points it looks like its flying. |
| Page 14, “They trust and turn to stay ahead of the cheetah.” | Q: What is one animal that we know the cheetah hunts?  A: A gazelle.  F: Does this make the cheetah higher or lower on the food chain than the gazelle?  A: Higher on the food chain.  F: That means that animals that eat others animals or plants are higher up on the food chain. |
| Page 14, “…its toes grip the ground.” | Q: What are different adaptations the cheetah makes to catch their prey?  A: Their claws retract.  F: Why is it important for a cheetah that their claws retract?  A: The claws can dig into the ground.  F: Any other adaptations?  A: They have hard feet.  F: What does having hard feet do?  A: Helps them grip the ground as they run. |
| Page 14, “…cat change direction with ease.” | Q: How is a cheetah’s tail different from other cats, like the cats some of you might own as pets?  A: It is not fluffy, it is flat.  F: How does having a flat tail help the cheetah?  A: The tail helps cheetah steer in the right direction when they are running.  F: Everyone take a look at the picture on page 15 and see how the tail is acting as a rudder to help make sharp turns while chasing prey. |
| Page 16, “In a flash, the cheetah leaps forward.” | Q: What do you think happens next without reading ahead?  A: The cheetah is going to capture the gazelle.  F: How will the cheetah capture the gazelle?  A: By biting it. |
| Page 16, “The gazelle zigs and zags, and the cheetah follows it every move.” | Q: Through the adaptations we have learned, can someone tell me how the cheetah is able to follow its prey?  A: By using its tail to help them steer.  F: What would you use your tail if you had one that could help you steer?  A: Help me when playing tag at recess. |
| Page 16, “The gazelle can no longer breath. It dies.” | Q: How did the cheetah capture the gazelle?  A: By swatting at the gazelle.  F: Then, once the gazelle had been captured, how did the cheetah kill the gazelle?  A: By biting its neck. |
| Page 16, “…steal this meal from the cheetah.” | Q: Why must the cheetah not wait too long to eat the gazelle?  A: A lion or leopard might eat it if they wait too long.  F: At dinner if you do not eat something on your plate will someone try and take it off of your plate?  A: My older brother will try and steal my desert. |
| Page 16, “All these adaptations make the cheetah an awesome predator.” | Q: Overall would you say the cheetah is a good predator or a bad predator after reading the article?  A: A good predator.  F: Are they at the top of the food chain or bottom in this article.  A: They are at the top.  F: Why might they be at the top?  A: No one tried to eat them. |
| Page 16-17, picture | Q: Looking at the picture can everyone tell me the six main adaptions that make the cheetah a good predator of its prey?  A: Tail as rudder, spine is like a spring, light skeleton to run faster, grooved footpads for better traction, large heart and lungs to avoid fatigue, and semi-retractable claws to help with traction.  F: The cheetah sounds like a really cool animal. |